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FM AMEMBASSY DUSHANBE
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 0965
INFO RUCNCIS/CIS COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUEHAH/AMEMBASSY ASHGABAT PRIORITY 0074
RUEHTA/AMEMBASSY ASTANA PRIORITY 0083
RUEHEK/AMEMBASSY BISHKEK PRIORITY 0079
RUEHMO/AMEMBASSY MOSCOW PRIORITY 0051
RUEHSI/AMEMBASSY TBILISI PRIORITY 0002
RUEHVL/AMEMBASSY VILNIUS PRIORITY 0002
RUEHYE/AMEMBASSY YEREVAN PRIORITY 0003

C O N F I D E N T I A L DUSHANBE 001122

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR SCA/CEN AND EUR/RUS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 09/04/2018
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PBTS](#) [RS](#) [GG](#) [TITI](#)
SUBJECT: TAJIKISTAN - PRESIDENTIAL ADVISER ON SOUTH OSSETIA
AND ABKHAZIA

REF: STATE 93357

Classified By: Acting DCM Matt Purl, Reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

¶1. (C) Charge and Acting DCM met on September 4 with Erkin Rahmatulloev, Presidential Adviser on Foreign Policy, to discuss a number of issues. Charge passed Rahmatulloev a copy of refTel demarche, and asked whether Tajikistan had received a letter from Russia officially informing the GOTI of Russia's decision to recognize the independence of Abkhazia and South Ossetia.

¶2. (C) Choosing his words with care, Rahmatulloev said "I cannot confirm" the receipt of such a letter, noting that "we receive many letters." The GOTI was familiar with Russia's explanation of its actions in Georgia, and was also aware of the U.S. position. There was no need for a written explanation from the Russians, since the leaders of Russia and Tajikistan had just met, and would meet again at the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) meeting on Moscow on September 5. Rahmatulloev said the heads of state discussed the "general issue of Georgia" at the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) summit in Dushanbe on August 28, but their discussions did not focus on the specific issue of Abkhazian and South Ossetian independence. At the summit "we felt no pressure from Russia" regarding the overall issue of Georgia, or recognition of South Ossetia and Abkhazia, Rahmatulloev said, and concluded that at the September 5 CSTO meeting "we will take a decision based on our national interests." He indicated he was not willing to say more on the matter.

¶3. (C) On a more entertaining note, at meeting immediately preceding the one with Rahmatulloev, Presidential economics advisor Matlubon Davlatov opened the meeting by showing Charge an article he was reading off the internet that reported the U.S. was getting ready to help Saakashvili flee and had offered him U.S. citizenship. Davlatov added that the plan was to use a U.S. army medevac helicopter to exfiltrate the Georgian president.

¶4. (C) Comment: Rahmatulloev's claim that Tajikistan "felt no pressure from Russia" to support its actions in Georgia at the SCO summit is dubious, but along with his other comments does indicate how careful the GOTI wants to be to keep a low profile on the Georgia conflict. His coy statement that Tajikistan's position would be governed by "national interest" is ambiguous, leaving the door open to stronger support for Russia at the CSTO, or continued resistance. End Comment.

